

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 89

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 69

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 89—Relative to the Nguyen Ngoc Phu Human Rights Memorial Interchange.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 4, 2010.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 89, Correa. Nguyen Ngoc Phu Human Rights Memorial Interchange.

This measure would designate the Beach Boulevard Interchange on State Highway Route 22 in the County of Orange as the Nguyen Ngoc Phu Human Rights Memorial Interchange. The measure would request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost of appropriate signs showing this designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen was a young student, a community leader, and an ardent voice for freedom, human rights, and democracy, particularly in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen was born in Vietnam on November 27, 1983, and immediately faced challenging conditions. His father served honorably as a South Vietnamese military police officer and suffered at the hands of a communist government as a prisoner in a concentration camp for seven years. His mother struggled every day to support her family in postwar Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, In 1991, Phu, his brother, Nguyen Ngoc Phong, his sister, Nguyen Kim Phung, and his parents, Nguyen Ngoc Luu and Vo Kim Cuc, seized the opportunity to make a new life for themselves when the United States welcomed Vietnamese veterans who fought alongside American forces in South Vietnam through the Orderly Departure Program; and

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen and his family settled in Santa Ana, California, and became a part of the growing Orange County Vietnamese American community; and

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen excelled academically at Thomas Paine Elementary School, McGarvin Intermediate School, and Valley High School. Phu Ngoc Nguyen thereafter attended and graduated Summa Cum Laude from California State University, Fullerton, and was selected as a McNair Scholar. He was later accepted into the University of California, Los Angeles, preparatory program for medical students; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his educational pursuits, Phu Ngoc Nguyen was an active member and a scout leader in the Hue Quang Buddhist Youth Group and a dedicated member of the Doan Thanh Nien Phan Boi Chau youth group; and

WHEREAS, In 2001, Phu Ngoc Nguyen returned to visit Vietnam and witnessed the abject poverty that challenged the daily lives of many Vietnamese people; and

WHEREAS, Drawing strength from that experience, Phu Ngoc Nguyen recommitted himself to helping the Vietnamese American community by becoming involved in and leading student organizations to honor the Vietnamese culture and to celebrate, defend, and press for freedom both here and in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, In his role as a community activist, Phu Ngoc Nguyen served as vice president of the Union of Vietnamese Students Association of Southern California and executive board member of the Vietnamese Student Union at the California State University; and

WHEREAS, In 2002, Phu Ngoc Nguyen organized a two-day hunger strike to protest human rights and religious freedom violations in Vietnam. In 2003, Phu Ngoc Nguyen served as a lead organizer of the International Vietnamese Youth Conference, which highlighted human rights, social justice, and community service; and

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen served the greater Orange County community as chair of the Orange County Human Rights Night on International Human Rights Day in 2004; and

WHEREAS, As chair of the 2005 Tet Festival in Garden Grove, California, Phu Ngoc Nguyen mobilized over 700 students and 50 organizations to participate in an event that drew tens of thousands of people; and

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen served as a citizen advisor to the Mayor of Westminster, California, from 2004 to 2005 and helped bridge communities through cultural understanding and community service; and

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen was instrumental in organizing an annual commemoration event at the Vietnam War Memorial in the City of Westminster to honor United States and South Vietnamese veterans and the soldiers who sacrificed their lives for freedom during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen reached out to and involved young Vietnamese Americans by hosting a weekly radio program entitled “Tieng Noi Sing Vien” on Sai Gon Radio Hai Ngoai; and

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen pressed for the passage of a resolution in Orange County recognizing the yellow flag with three red stripes as the Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom Flag in the county and the county passed this resolution on June 7, 2005, the day Phu Ngoc Nguyen passed away; and

WHEREAS, Hundreds of people have been inspired by Phu Ngoc Nguyen’s short but meaningful life. Local organizations, including the Union of Vietnamese Students Association, California State University, Fullerton, Viet Bao Daily News, and the Vietnamese Community of Southern California have named scholarships and programs in the memory of Phu Ngoc Nguyen; and

WHEREAS, Phu Ngoc Nguyen's life serves as an example of how one young person can have a positive impact on those around him and his community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby designates the Beach Boulevard (State Highway Route 39) Interchange on State Highway Route 22 in the County of Orange as the Nguyen Ngoc Phu Human Rights Memorial Interchange; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Transportation is requested to determine the cost of appropriate signs, consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system, showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover the cost, to erect those signs; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the Department of Transportation and to the author for appropriate distribution.